

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

As an initial matter, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Morillo for the interview and follow-up discussion with the Examiner concerning the claimed invention, the previously filed Response and declaration, the amendment to claim 1 above, and the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references in view of the amendment. The following further expands on the discussions with the Examiner.

The rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by XP 00227868 (XP '686) in view of the ASM Handbook: Vol. 2, and the rejections of claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over XP '686 in view of the ASM Handbook: Vol. 2 and of claims 17-18 as obvious over XP '686 are obviated by amendment.

As shown above, the pure titanium material claim 1 requires the presence of a "surface oxide film of 170 Å or below in thickness," which is not described or suggested by the references.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertion on page 3 of the present Office Action that the reference "does not teach forming oxide layer on said Ti alloy", Applicants point out that the reference does describe the presence of the formation of a "protective oxide layer" and "thin oxide films" which are advantageous for "corrosion resistance." (See columns 1 and 2 of the first page of the XP '686 reference). However, the reference does not describe modifying the oxide film to the thickness of 170 Å or below, as presently claimed. Therefore, the reference does not anticipate the present claims. Moreover, the reference indicates that the oxide film becomes "darker and thicker" after it is initially formed, with no indication of a specific thickness or any evidence that the claimed thickness would be advantageous. (See column 2 of the first page of the XP '686 reference). Therefore, the claim invention is not obvious in view of the reference.

Applicants note that the Examiner relies on the ASM Handbook: Vol. 2 for the impurities that may exist in "iodide Ti" or "electrolytic Ti"; however, there is no evidence or suggestion in the reference to limit the formation of an oxide layer as presently claimed.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

The rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 17, and 18 as being obvious over JP 09-003573 (JP '573), and of claim 2 as being obvious over JP '573 in view of JP 10-008234 (JP '234) are obviated by amendment.

As discussed above, claim 1 has been amended with the limitations of claim 2, which recites "a surface oxide film of 170 Å or below in thickness."

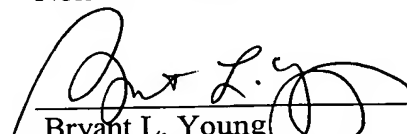
As acknowledged by the Examiner in the present Office Action at page 4, the JP '573 reference does not "mention the formation of an oxide coating" of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner relies on the disclosure of the JP '234, since the reference generally describes the formation of an oxide film having a thickness of $\geq 20\text{Å}$. However, the reference does not cure any of the deficiencies of the JP '573 reference, since the reference does not describe the formation of an oxide layer in the claimed range on a pure titanium material formed of the pure titanium of the claimed invention. Therefore, the combined references would not be obvious in view of the claimed invention.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Applicants submit that this application is now in condition for allowance and early notification of such is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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